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WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Secret government operations, supposedly alien to a free democratic society, are one of the earmarks of the police state. And there is to our thinking too much information being withheld from the public by those serving in our government. Not only information about what is going on, what has transpired, but also, what plans are being laid for the future in our name.

All of this passed through our mind while reading an article which appears in the forthcoming February edition of the magazine, *The Realist*, in which author Eric Norden tackles "The Murder of Malcolm X." Weaving fact into analysis, Norden's article reads, as do many of the recent books and articles on the Kennedy assassination, like something out of Eric Ambler's "Journey Into Fear," disturbing in content, sinister in implication.

From a mass of circumstantial evidence, based on extensive interviews and research, Norden concludes that the February, 1965 murder of Malcolm Little, who gained public notice as Malcolm X, was a political assassination, not the slaying of a heretic by members of the Black Muslims, a supposition that led more than one newspaper to editorialize along the lines that "hate reaps its just reward."

Norden, to the contrary, says that Malcolm at the time of his assassination was under constant surveillance, both at home and abroad, by persons suspected of having CIA and/or State Department connections. This suspicion was reported in the New York Times in February of 1965 in a story that said

"most of Malcolm's admirers appear to believe he was murdered on orders from the U.S. government."

James Farmer, one of the more "respectable" civil rights leaders, was quoted in the New York Times as saying "the killing of Malcolm X was a political act, with international implications and not necessarily connected with black nationalism."

Begging the question, there seems to be some truth in reports that U.S. government officials were taking a dim view of Malcolm's travels across Africa in an effort, according to Norden, "to internationalize the American racial question by bringing it before the United Nations under the Human Rights provision of the UN charter . . . a move, which, if successful, could prove Washington's most humiliating propaganda reversal of the Cold War."

In August, 1964, the N. Y. Times from Washington reported that "the State Department and Justice Department began to take an interest in Malcolm's campaign to convince African states to raise the question of persecution of American Negroes at the U. N."

As we indicated, Norden's case is constructed on circumstantial evidence, some of it very disturbing indeed, all of it very interesting. But the point that Norden most of all raises, and the thought that lingers on after reading, is that we, a supposedly free people, don't know what's going on in high government place. Secrecy prevails. The sort of secrecy that might lead cold war protagonists to engage in efforts to sabotage deliberations revolving around the peace in the world and hence, a safe future for all mankind.